

CHAPTER 9

SOCIOCULTURAL EFFECTS EVALUATION

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9 SOCIOCULTURAL EFFECTS EVALUATION

9-1 OVERVIEW

9-1.1 Purpose

Transportation actions can affect communities and influence the quality of life of its citizens. The significance of these effects must be determined by careful evaluation. This chapter contains the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT's) procedures for evaluating sociocultural effects (SCE) in the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) phase of project delivery. These procedures ensure that transportation projects in the PD&E phase comply with FDOT's ***Sociocultural Effects Evaluation Policy (000-650-015)***. The SCE Evaluation process also supports legal requirements for FDOT project development to account for sociocultural resources that may be affected by project activities (see **Section 9-1.3**).

FDOT Sociocultural Effects Evaluation Policy

It is the policy of the Florida Department of Transportation to work proactively with communities in implementing the principles, concepts, and philosophy of Sociocultural Effects Evaluation throughout the transportation project development process. Transportation facilities and services make an important contribution to a community's economy and quality of life. Understanding the vision, goals and objectives, and the values of a community's citizenry is essential to providing effective, community-based solutions to transportation while addressing appropriate community concerns.

9-1.2 Definition

Sociocultural Effects Evaluation (SCE Evaluation) is a process used to evaluate and address the effects of a transportation action on a community and its quality of life. The SCE Evaluation process is called "Community Impact Assessment" in some state and federal policies; these terms can be used interchangeably.

The SCE Evaluation process ensures that community values and concerns receive adequate attention during transportation development. The process focuses on a transportation project's potential effects on social, economic, land use, mobility, aesthetic (including noise), and relocation issues, with consideration for any Civil Rights implications in each category. **Table 9.1** lists some examples of considerations evaluated for each of the six SCE issues. The SCE Evaluation process involves affected communities and residents, as well as transportation planners and decision-makers, to evaluate the potential effects of a transportation action on a community. Information gathered through the SCE Evaluation process is used as a basis for decision-making throughout project delivery.

TABLE 9.1 Sociocultural Effects Issues

SOCIAL	ECONOMIC	LAND USE	MOBILITY	AESTHETICS	RELOCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics • Community Cohesion • Safety / Emergency Response • Community Goals • Quality of Life • Special Community Designations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business & Employment • Tax Base • Traffic Patterns • Business Access • Special Needs Patrons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use – Urban Form • Local Plan Consistency • Open Space • Sprawl • Focal Points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modal Choices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pedestrian ○ Bicyclists ○ Transit ○ Transportation Disadvantaged • Connectivity • Traffic Circulation • Public Parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise/ Vibration • Viewshed • Compatibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential • Non-Residential • Public Facilities

9-1.3 Legislative Authority

Table 9.2 presents the major federal and state laws, rules, and regulations requiring that the FDOT project development process considers effects on the community.

TABLE 9.2 Legislation Pertaining to Sociocultural Effects Evaluation

Title and Citation	Relevance to Sociocultural Effects
Federal Legislation	
<i>National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 USC § 4331)</i>	Requires analysis of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of projects using federal funds, including the integrated use of the social sciences in assessing impacts on the human environment
<i>Federal Aid Highway Act of 1970 (23 USC 109(h))</i>	Defines specific impacts that must be considered in developing any project on any Federal-aid system, including social and economic impacts to communities
<i>Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500-1508)</i>	Requires federal agencies to use all practicable means, consistent with the requirements of NEPA, to avoid or minimize any possible adverse effects of their actions upon the quality of the human environment
<i>Environmental Impact and Related Procedures (23 CFR 771)</i>	Prescribes policies and procedures for implementing NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations, among these being early and continuing opportunities during project development for the public to be involved in the identification of social, economic, and environmental impacts, as well as impacts associated with relocation of individuals, groups, or institutions. Also provides that no person, because of disability, age, race, color, sex, or national origin, be excluded from participating in, or denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any Administration program or procedural activity required by or developed pursuant to this regulation
<i>Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise (23 CFR, Part 772)</i>	Provides procedures for noise studies and noise abatement measures to help protect the public health and welfare.
<i>Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents (TA6640.8A)</i>	Prescribes early coordination with agencies and the public to determine the scope of issues to be addressed and to identify and focus on the proposed action's important issues

Title and Citation	Relevance to Sociocultural Effects
<i>Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d)</i>	Provides that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance
<i>Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (42 U.S.C. §3601- §3639)</i>	Prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental and financing of dwellings based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin
<i>The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470)</i>	Establishes the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks, which lists properties that are significant to the Nation's heritage and are preserved as a living part of our community life. Section 106 requires that federal agencies consider the effects of their undertakings on significant cultural resources.
<i>FHWA Environmental Policy Statement</i>	Formal commitment to ensure that policies and investments embrace the concerns of neighborhoods, communities, and society as a whole
<i>Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations</i>	Addresses environmental justice, requiring special attention to addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations
<i>Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency</i>	Improves access to federally conducted and federally assisted programs and activities for persons who, as a result of national origin, are limited in their English proficiency (LEP)
<i>Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), August 25, 2005. (Includes changes throughout 23 U.S.C.)</i>	Requires increased consideration of the environment in both statewide and metropolitan planning. The law requires public participation activities for all interested parties in the development of transportation projects. Sections 6001 and 6002 specifically address planning and environmental requirements.
State Legislation	
<i>Chapter 163, Part II, Florida Statutes (F.S.) Rule 9J-5, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)</i>	Establishes state growth management policy for the purpose of protecting human, environmental, social, and economic resources; and maintaining the character and stability of present and future land use and development in the state. Ensures that community impacts are considered in the preparation of all of the elements in the comprehensive plan.
<i>Section 339.175 (6)(b), F.S. Metropolitan planning organization powers duties and responsibilities</i>	Requires the Long Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program to consider the overall social, economic, energy, and environmental effect of transportation decisions.
<i>Chapter 348.0004, F.S. Expressway and Bridge Authorities: purposes and powers</i>	Requires that Expressway and Bridge Authorities consider the local plans and social, cultural, and historic values of the state in the planning, construction, and operation of these facilities.
<i>Chapter 267, F.S. - Florida Historical Resources Act</i>	Addresses state historic and archaeological resources, which are important considerations in sociocultural evaluations
<i>Section 253.027, F.S. - Emergency Archaeological Properties Acquisition Act of 1998</i>	Protects archaeological properties of major statewide significance from destruction as a result of imminent development, vandalism, or natural events
<i>Chapter 872, F.S. - Offenses Concerning Dead Bodies and Graves</i>	Addresses injuring or removing tombs or monuments, disturbing contents of grave or tomb, and unmarked human burials, which include potential historic and cultural resources
<i>Chapter 187, F.S. - State Comprehensive Plan</i>	Establishes statewide comprehensive plans that include goals, objectives, and strategies for the overall transportation system in Florida and which must consider community effects

Title and Citation	Relevance to Sociocultural Effects
<i>Section 339.155, F.S. - Florida Transportation Plan</i>	Describes requirements of an annual Florida Transportation Plan, including procedures for public participation (subsection 6)
<i>Section 332.006, F.S. - Florida Aviation System Plan</i>	Establishes statewide aviation system plans that include goals, objectives, and strategies for the overall transportation system in Florida and which must consider community effects and must comply with the Florida Transportation Plan, including public participation
<i>Section 335.17, F.S. – State highway construction; means of noise abatement</i>	Requires the use of noise-control methods in the construction of all new state highways, with particular emphasis on those highways located in or near urban-residential developments which abut such highway rights-of-way.
<i>Section 338.00(3)(f)1, F.S. - Florida Intrastate Highway System Cost Feasible Plan</i>	Establishes statewide intrastate highway system cost feasible plans that include goals, objectives, and strategies for the overall transportation system in Florida and which must comply with local comprehensive plans
<i>Chapter 311, F.S. - Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development</i>	Establishes statewide seaport transportation and development plans that include goals, objectives, and strategies for the overall transportation system in Florida and which must comply with local comprehensive plans
<i>Chapter 341, F.S. - Intermodal Development Program</i>	Establishes statewide intermodal development program that includes goals, objectives, and strategies for the overall transportation system in Florida and which must comply with the Florida Transportation Plan, including public participation
<i>Title XLVI, Chapter 760, F.S. – Florida Civil Right Act</i>	Secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status and thereby to protect their interest in personal dignity, to make available to the state their full productive capacities, to secure the state against domestic strife and unrest, to preserve the public safety, health, and general welfare, and to promote the interests, rights, and privileges of individuals within the state.

9-2 PROCEDURE

This section describes the considerations and steps to be covered in the SCE Evaluation process. This is a fluid process. If community conditions change considerably during the PD&E phase, it may be necessary to periodically re-evaluate earlier findings to assure that the assessment is still accurate. To streamline the SCE Evaluation process, future needs and relevant data should be collected early in the process.

9-2.1 Determine the Level of Effort

A Sociocultural Effects Evaluation is required for all levels of environmental documentation as established by the project's Class of Action. **Part 1, Chapter 2** of this Manual describes the various Classes of Action and the procedures for determining them. The level of assessment and documentation during the PD&E phase depends on the potential for significant impacts and may vary according to the Class of Action. It will be up to the analyst to determine what is reasonable given context and will depend upon the following:

1. Size and complexity of the project

2. Level of controversy involved
3. Potential for significant impacts
4. Amount of information available from previous project phases

Major transportation projects (those requiring Type 2 Categorical Exclusion [CE], Environmental Assessment [EA], Environmental Impact Statement [EIS], or State Environmental Impact Report [SEIR]), will have received prior consideration of Sociocultural Effects during the Programming phase. Results of these evaluations are available for review and verification in the ***Final Programming Screen Summary Report***. For these projects, the SCE Evaluation in PD&E focuses on important topics identified during the Programming Screen and through public involvement efforts. It may not be necessary to analyze each and every SCE issue in PD&E. Steps which were adequately completed during the previous phases do not need to be repeated. Impacts which were adequately documented in the ***Final Programming Screen Summary Report*** do not need further evaluation, unless raised as an area of community concern. However, if an issue was not evaluated in the ***Final Programming Screen Summary Report***, then it must be evaluated during PD&E.

The level of assessment during PD&E depends on the potential for significant impacts, as defined by CEQ regulations (***40 CFR §§ 1500-1508***). It will be up to the analyst to determine what is reasonable in the given context. If an issue surfaces that is of considerable concern to an affected community, it should be assessed regardless of the nature of the project. This will help assure that all issues are adequately addressed and reduce the probability that community impacts alter the project later in production. A more extensive SCE Evaluation may be needed for transportation projects that:

1. Require large amounts of Right of Way or would displace a large number of people
2. Could cause a substantial increase or decrease in traffic through an area
3. Conflict with local comprehensive plans
4. Impact community facilities, such as schools, parks or churches
5. Impact historic districts or community landmarks
6. Adversely affect aesthetic features, such as canopy roads or scenic vistas
7. Disrupt or divide an established or cohesive neighborhood

Recent major shifts in the demographics of a region or the introduction of a community planning initiative (for example, sustainable development, community

redevelopment areas (CRA), or Main Street program) may also indicate the need for a more extensive analysis.

9-2.2 Consider Civil Rights and Environmental Justice

9-2.2.1 Civil Rights

Underlying the SCE Evaluation process is a concern for nondiscrimination. Requirements of **Title VI** of the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** (as amended) and related statutes are given complete and careful consideration during the entire SCE Evaluation process. FDOT policy requires that no person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability/handicap, or income status will be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination or retaliation under any program or activity administered by FDOT. **Executive Order 13166** requires that outreach include people with limited English proficiency. Meeting these non-discrimination requirements and documenting the efforts involved are an integral part of the SCE Evaluation process.

The community analyst must also ensure that all aspects of the **Civil Rights Act** and related statutes have been addressed through additional coordination with the District Title VI Coordinator. The FDOT Central Environmental Management Office should also be consulted. For federal highway projects, consultation with FHWA is necessary in situations where disproportionately high and adverse effects affecting protected social groups are involved. In all cases, the project files should include documentation showing consideration of **Title VI** and related statutes.

9-2.2.2 Environmental Justice

Environmental justice (**Executive Order 12898**) involves implementation of the following three general principles as noted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (**Publication No. FHWA-EP-00-013**):

1. To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations
2. To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process
3. To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

Although these special population groups in the project area may be small, this does not eliminate the possibility of a disproportionately high and adverse effect of a proposed action. Environmental justice determinations are made based on effects, not population size. The critical factor in environmental justice determinations is the

comparative impact of an action on each of the population groups. Gathering information for SCE Evaluations includes special efforts to ensure the inclusion and participation of all people in the community. While evaluating each of the SCE issues, the community analyst must:

1. Analyze sociocultural effects on all communities to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all populations
2. Identify if disproportionately high and adverse community effects exist
3. Ensure that mitigation measures address any disproportionately high and adverse environmental effects of proposed actions on any applicable populations within the study area
4. Work with public involvement staff to provide opportunities for community input throughout the project development process, including consultation with affected communities to identify potential effects and possible mitigation measures, and improving accessibility to public meetings, project documents, and project decision-makers. Include accommodation of people with limited English proficiency within the project area

For example, the transportation project should not intentionally follow the path of the lowest property values which impact principally low-income housing or minority neighborhoods without adequate study and reasonable engineering, economic, and social justification. There must be reasonable evidence that the selection of a project alternative was not a discriminatory act. Coordination with the FHWA and the FDOT Central Environmental Management Office in highly controversial situations will aid in providing such assurance.

9-2.3 Include Community Outreach

Proactive community outreach, including all segments of society, is an integral part of SCE Evaluation. This outreach leads to decision-making that is more likely to be responsive to community concerns and goals, resulting in greater community acceptance of proposed transportation improvements, enhancing agency credibility, and ensuring non-discrimination. These activities assist with the following tasks which may occur throughout Planning, Programming, and PD&E phases:

1. Determining and validating the purpose and need for a project
2. Identifying project alternatives
3. Preparing the community characteristics inventory
4. Evaluating sociocultural effects

5. Identifying ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse impacts
6. Identifying potential enhancement opportunities
7. Resolving controversy that may arise

Gaining familiarity with local perceptions and conditions is invaluable in the identification of potential effects and strategies to resolve effects. Interaction with community organizations, community advocacy groups, local government committees, and non-governmental organizations relative to a project can provide transportation decision makers insight on local attitudes, perceptions, and preferences that may be used for the development of project concepts. Community outreach opportunities should be provided to develop relationships with community leaders and interested parties. The ***Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), August 25, 2005*** defines “interested parties” as:

1. Citizens (Residents/Tenants)
2. Affected Public Agencies
3. Representatives of Public Transportation Employees
4. Freight Shippers
5. Private Providers of Transportation
6. Representatives of Users of Public Transportation
7. Representatives of Users of Pedestrian Walkways and Bicycle Transportation Facilities
8. Representatives of the Disabled
9. Providers of Freight Transportation Services
10. Other Interested Parties

Community outreach efforts for SCE Evaluations are closely tied to FDOT’s Public Involvement procedures. The amount and type of outreach will depend on the nature and scope of the project. Close coordination among these activities will minimize duplication in outreach tasks. For more information, see the ***Public Involvement Handbook*** and ***Part 1, Chapter 11*** of this ***PD&E Manual***.

9-2.4 Evaluate SCE for Minor Projects with Less than Significant Impacts

Since projects approved as Type 1 and Programmatic Categorical Exclusions (CEs) and Non-Major State Actions (NMSA) are generally minor in nature and have little or no impacts, detailed SCE evaluations will generally not be warranted, unless there are unusual circumstances. For these types of projects, the SCE evaluation consists of considering the six SCE issues (See **Table 9.1**) in sufficient detail to ensure that the project meets the conditions of the determination regarding impacts to:

1. Local traffic patterns
2. Property access
3. Community cohesiveness
4. Planned community growth or land use patterns

The analyst should begin with a basic understanding of the nature of the project and of the sociocultural conditions surrounding it. The SCE Considerations in **Table 9.3** highlight relevant questions to help identify potential impacts. The analyst may use these as guidance for ensuring that the COA conditions are met. For more information about the conditions for Type 1 and Programmatic CEs, see **Part 1, Chapter 2** of this Manual. For more information about conditions for NMSAs, see **Part 1, Chapter 10** of this Manual.

9-2.5 Evaluate SCE for Major Transportation Projects

This section describes the steps and considerations to be covered in the SCE Evaluation process for major transportation projects during PD&E. Major transportation projects (Type 2 CEs, EAs, EISs, or SEIRs) generally have a higher potential for impacts and therefore require a more detailed level of analysis and documentation. For these projects, SCE Evaluations conducted during PD&E build upon information gathered during the Planning and Programming phases when one or both phases have been done. In accordance with **Part 1, Chapter 2** of this Manual, all major transportation projects must complete the ETDM Programming Phase. Most will also have completed the Planning Phase. As projects move forward through each phase, SCE issues receive more detailed consideration as follows:

ETDM Process Intended for Major Transportation Improvement Projects

- New roadways or a new location
- Addition of new lanes to a roadway
- New fixed rail transit construction
- Public transportation projects
- New bridge construction
- Bridge widening
- New interchange or major interchange modification
- Major capital improvements (intermodal centers and transit centers)

1. **Planning Screen Evaluations** - identify fatal flaws or controversies that would prevent the project from moving forward or requiring adjustments to the project concept.
2. **Programming Screen Evaluations** - provide additional commentary about project effects, scoping recommendations for any required SCE evaluation, and identifying targeted public outreach activities to further understand the magnitude of potential effects and to determine methods for resolving impacts. The programming screen evaluation builds upon information gathered during the planning screening, if applicable.
3. **PD&E Evaluations** – build upon previous evaluations by filling information gaps, focus on issues of concern identified in planning and programming, and complete the appropriate level of environmental documentation.

The basic steps of the SCE Evaluation process in PD&E, are included in **Figure 9.1**, and summarized below. For more information about SCE evaluation during planning and programming phases see the **ETDM Planning and Programming Manual**. Public involvement is an integral part of each of these steps:

1. Review ETDM **Final Programming Screen Summary Report**
2. Refine or define the Study Area
3. Prepare the Community Characteristics Inventory
4. Evaluate Sociocultural Effects
5. Recommend Ways to Resolve Issues
6. Document Results

It is important to re-emphasize that it may not be necessary to conduct each step as rigorously as described in this chapter. Ideally, previous evaluations conducted during the Programming screen will be available for review and verification in PD&E. The evaluation in PD&E should focus on topics identified during the Programming Screen and through public involvement efforts. For steps completed during the ETDM screening events, the community analyst should verify and update findings, as needed during PD&E. If conditions have changed or additional impacts are identified, then additional study during the PD&E phase will be required. In these cases, the level of effort involved in each step depends on the nature of the project, the level of controversy involved, and the potential for significant community impacts. See **Section 9-2.1** for additional guidance in determining the level of effort.

Each step is described in the following subsections. Refer to the **ETDM Programming and Planning Manual**, the **Sociocultural Effects Evaluation**

Handbook, and the **Public Involvement Handbook** for additional information regarding techniques and methodologies to support the SCE evaluation.

9-2.5.1 Step 1: Review ETDM Final Programming Summary Report

The results of the SCE Evaluations conducted during the Planning and Programming Screens provide the basis of the PD&E studies. Information from previous SCE Evaluations may be obtained in the ETDM **Final Programming Screen Summary Report**, which is available on the ETDM Environmental Screening Tool (EST) and the ETDM Public Access Web site. The following items in the **Programming Screen Summary Report** provide a good starting point:

Project Description	Review the Project Description to identify the project type, scale, location, and context.
Purpose and Need	Read the purpose and need statement to identify area and corridor deficiencies and understand the project objectives.
Summary of Public Comment	<p>Develop a sense of the public's perception of the project and the potential for project effects by investigating <i>existing</i> public commentary on the project. Additional sources of existing public commentary may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)2. Long Range Transportation Plan Development3. Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Priority List Development4. MPO Committees (e.g., CAC, TAC, BPAC, etc.)5. Local Government Planners

Also review applicable Community Characteristics Inventories available on the EST to learn about the demographic make-up, residential character, and selected community focal points in the project area.

Find more information about using the EST in the **Environmental Screening Tool Handbook**.

9-2.5.2 Step 2: Define the Study Area

For the purposes of the SCE evaluation, the study area is the geographic region which includes all communities and community resources with the potential to be

affected by a project. Communities can be well-defined geographic areas such as neighborhoods or subdivisions. They may also be less physically delineated places such as an unincorporated area with a name recognized by the community but without defined boundaries. The study area previously identified during the ETDM screening events may be adequate. Field reviews and public outreach may provide assistance with the identification and verification of study areas.

The basis of the study area is determined by the size and complexity of the project, the level of controversy involved, and the potential for impacts. These are identified by reviewing project data and analyzing existing conditions such as:

1. Demographics
2. Community Focal Points
3. Existing and Future Land Use
4. Plans, Policies and Designations
5. Transportation Infrastructure and Services

While most study areas include all adjacent resources within 500 feet from the proposed center line, a field review of the transportation corridor should be conducted to examine existing conditions which may warrant adjusting the study area. The study area should include community features which may be affected by the project. For road projects, there may be intersecting transportation facilities that provide connectivity to nearby communities that potentially could be affected by the project. Therefore, the area of potential effect for the project should be reasonably broad to allow for consideration of such potential impacts. For example, hospital property may be adjacent to the project study area, but the entire medical campus should be reviewed to locate surgical facilities that may be sensitive to noise and vibration.

In general, the initial study area for an SCE Evaluation in project development may consist of the area within 500 feet of the project. Because of the nature of social and community issues, this distance may need to be adjusted in order to accurately assess affected resources. The study area should be of appropriate size to accurately assess the issues. The study area should encompass any Special Designations which help in defining the community character, such as:

1. Florida Main Street
2. Historic Districts
3. Community Redevelopment Areas
4. Enterprise Zones

9-2.5.3 Step 3: Prepare or Update the Community Characteristics Inventory (CCI)

The community analyst reviews information describing the current conditions of the potentially affected communities. This includes social, economic, land use, mobility, aesthetic, and relocation data. The analyst also identifies any important community facilities and services. This step should focus on identifying the communities and resources which may be adversely affected by the project. During this step, the community analyst must also identify any specific subgroups in the population that are covered by **Executive Order 12898** on Environmental Justice, **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act** or related statutes.

9-2.5.3.1 Collect and Assess Data

The community analyst begins the task by collecting and organizing the social, economic, land use, mobility, aesthetic, and relocation data. The quality of the SCE Evaluation depends upon the consistency, currency, sufficiency, and quality of the data collected. Start with the results of the EST Planning and Programming Screens conducted for the project. Also review any CCI reports available on the EST for the study area. Although much quantitative data can be found in databases and GIS libraries, an accurate assessment cannot be completed without checking the data through field reviews, aerial photography, and communications with data sources and the public. This process includes using information stored on the EST for ETDM projects, and other existing GIS data, and suggests additional resources for evaluating local level and quantitative data. Professional judgment should be used to determine the level of analysis and the data needed to perform the SCE analysis. Ensure that the data supports Civil Rights and Environmental Justice considerations in each of the six SCE Issues (**Table 9.1**).

9-2.5.3.2 Prepare or Update the CCI

The Community Characteristics Inventory (CCI) is the summary of the historical and present conditions of the community. The CCI also profiles the important community facilities and services. The level of detail provided in the CCI is dependent on the extent of significant impacts determined by the analyst. For example, a Type 2 CE only needs enough information to determine that community resources are not significantly impacted by a project. On the other hand, an EIS needs to go into more detail to describe the impacts.

The CCI is used to:

1. Identify the existence of these facilities and services
2. Show on a map the proximity of each facility to the project

3. Define service areas, user groups and affected populations
4. For those groups identified above, discuss their principal involvement with the community
5. Determine the value of the service/facility to the community
6. Determine the project's impact on these services/facilities

The purpose of the CCI is to provide the community analyst with a focused summary for each of the issues as they relate to specific communities and population segments. The data are synthesized as they relate to the SCE issues: social, economic, land use, mobility, aesthetics, and relocation. Civil Rights and Environmental Justice considerations are addressed within the context of each issue. The CCI is the result of this data synthesis. Depending on the complexity of the project and potential for significant impacts, the CCI may be presented as a report, such as those available on the EST, or a simple data summary for the project file.

For more complex projects, the CCI will typically include the following:

1. A visual map or map series that depicts physical characteristics, such as neighborhood boundaries, land uses, public facilities, and commercial centers.
2. Narrative text describing community characteristics, such as demographics, economic, social history and values of the community(ies), the importance of various facilities, and plans for the future.
3. Tables, charts, and graphs that summarize important data or conclusions, such as demographics and employment and other trends.

Chapters 2 and 3 of the ***Sociocultural Effects Evaluation Handbook*** provide additional information on the preparation of the CCI.

The CCI, which may have originally been developed at the macro level during the Planning and Programming phases, is refined to the neighborhood, or micro level, in project development. CCI reports generated from standard GIS data are available on the EST. The analyst reviews information previously entered in the EST and updates it as needed. The CCI should be produced and used in conjunction with community outreach activities to assess the accuracy of the data and to understand the community and its values. Community outreach activities should be coordinated with the ***Public Involvement Program (Part 1, Chapter 11)***.

9-2.5.3.3 Determine Data Sufficiency

Once the CCI is prepared, the community analyst determines if there are sufficient data to evaluate each SCE issue. The community analyst uses the relevant SCE Considerations from the ***Sociocultural Effects Evaluation Handbook*** (included in **Table 9.3**) for evaluating issues and documenting potential adverse effects on the population. These considerations incorporate the metropolitan transportation planning factors, federal guidelines, and standard analysis techniques used in community planning. The SCE Considerations provide a basis for addressing social, economic, land use, mobility, aesthetic, and relocation issues. The community analyst determines if there are sufficient data to evaluate each SCE issue by considering the following:

1. Is the community accurately defined?
2. Are community resources identified?
3. Are the data available and appropriate to evaluate the issues (reasonably inclusive, comprehensive, reliable, and current)?

To affirm data sufficiency, the community analyst should field-verify the information and seek input from the community. These activities will assist the community analyst in determining:

1. Community facilities and services not previously noted
2. The importance of community facilities and resources
3. Community preferences and priorities
4. Community issues

If the data are not sufficient, the community analyst updates or collects the data needed to support the SCE Evaluation at the level of analysis warranted by the scope and nature of the project.

Once all relevant and necessary data are collected, assessed, and deemed sufficient for the evaluation, the information is summarized, mapped and the CCI updated. The community analyst now has more specific knowledge of the community and its boundaries and can proceed to evaluate the sociocultural effects.

9-2.5.4 Step 4: Evaluate Sociocultural Effects

Anticipating future conditions is crucial to an SCE Evaluation. The community analyst is required to study a minimum of two scenarios, including the community without the proposed transportation improvement and the community under one or more

project alternatives. Community effects of the project can then be interpreted as the difference between these two (or more) scenarios.

All feasible project alternatives, including the no-build alternative, must be investigated. Establishing the consequences of doing nothing helps to clarify what effects can be attributed to the project and the relative importance of those effects in relation to the potential benefits. In addition, conducting this analysis for each project alternative provides a meaningful basis for comparing alternatives and selecting a final alternative in conjunction with other considerations. The analyses conducted during the Planning and Programming phases may have already caused some alternatives to be previously eliminated. Detailed analysis on the eliminated alternatives should not be necessary during PD&E when the previous evaluations meet requirements of the environmental document. However, the project manager should consult with the lead agency before eliminating alternatives from further study.

The level of assessment and documentation that is reasonable for a project will vary depending upon the size and complexity of the project, the level of controversy involved, and the potential for significant community effects (for more information see discussion in **Section 9-2.1**). For major transportation projects, PD&E studies focus on issues of concern identified in the **Final Programming Screen Summary Report** and from public involvement activities. In general, the analysis required for various environmental documents includes the following:

1. **Type 2 CEs** must be evaluated in enough detail to demonstrate that there are no significant impacts likely to occur as the result of implementing the proposed project. (Additional information is available in **Part 1, Chapter 5** of this Manual.)
2. **Environmental Assessments** help to determine whether or not an EIS is needed. The analysis should be concise, yet provide sufficient evidence for determining whether to prepare an EIS or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). (See **Part 1, Chapter 6** of this Manual.)
3. **Environmental Impact Statements (EISs)** will have significant environmental impacts to assess. The consideration, analysis, and documentation of the **appropriate** issues must be reasonably detailed and disclosed as required by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations. The level of analysis and documentation required for a specific EIS primarily depends on the potential for the action to cause adverse or significant environmental impacts. (See **Part 1, Chapters 8 and 9** of this Manual for more detailed discussions of EISs.)
4. **State Environmental Impact Reports (SEIRs)** discuss the potential impacts of the proposed project on the surrounding community with enough detail to provide a description of impacts and determine the level of impact on the

community. (See **Part 1, Chapter 10** of this Manual for additional instructions about SEIRs.)

Regardless of the Class of Action, the SCE Evaluation should assess issues of concern to an affected community.

The Council of Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for implementing the Procedural Provisions of the **National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)** require that three general types of environmental effects be evaluated for proposed transportation and other Federal projects (**CEQ, 1997**). SCE Evaluation addresses all three categories of effects from **40 CFR Part 1508.7 and Part 1508.8**:

1. Direct effects - caused by the action and occur at the same time and place
2. Indirect effects - caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth-inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems
3. Cumulative effects - result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

The SCE Considerations in **Table 9.3** provide guidance for addressing social, economic, land use, mobility, aesthetic, and relocation issues. These considerations incorporate the metropolitan transportation planning factors, federal guidelines, and standard analysis techniques used by the community analyst. Crosscutting these issues is the concern for nondiscrimination as described in **Section 9-2.2**. Instructions on how to apply these questions and suggestions for data sources are included in the **SCE Handbook**.

Using the CCI and the SCE Considerations (**Table 9.3**), the community analyst assesses the effects of a transportation action on the community for each of the key sociocultural issues. The community analyst studies the primary and secondary data sources to determine the potential effects for each issue. The following evaluation objectives describe the general expectations for each issue. Use the SCE Considerations in **Table 9.3** for more detailed guidance.

1. **Social Effects** - Identify project social effects on community resources and/or focal points, including the demographic character of the population and the social framework in the project area.

2. **Economic Effects** - Identify potential for project effects to all components contributing to the economic activity within the affected community, as well as those elements impacting the economies of the county and region.
3. **Land Use Effects** - Determine the consistency of the project with community plans, including the local government comprehensive plan and the physical character of the project area.
4. **Mobility Effects** - Identify the project effects on mobility and accessibility in the affected community. Particular emphasis should be afforded to the non-driving population groups, including the elderly, young, disabled, and low-income individuals.
5. **Aesthetics Effects** - Determine the project's compatibility with the physical character (existing or planned), noise impacts, and the aesthetic values of the affected community. (Refer also to **Part 2, Chapters 15 and 17** of this Manual.)
6. **Relocation Effects** - Identify potential for relocation of residences, businesses, institutional or community facilities as a result of the project. (See additional requirements in **Section 9-3.3**)

SCE effects are interconnected; thus it is important that the community analyst recognize the relationship. The interrelationship of effects varies with the type of transportation action and the affected community. The community analyst does not focus on the considerations separately. Examining how effects relate to each other and counterbalancing the effects of various considerations are critical to the resolution of issues.

In keeping with FDOT's **Context Sensitive Solutions Policy (000-650-002)**, the community analyst considers context sensitive solutions that would make the project "fit" the needs of the community better. This is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation project that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. The information gathered during the planning and programming steps may provide the analyst guidance on how to improve the project to best meet community needs.

FDOT Context Sensitive Solutions Policy **(Topic No. 000-650-002)**

It is the policy of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to use a Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) approach on transportation projects and activities for all modes appropriate to scale, cost, location, and schedule.

Context Sensitive Solutions is a proactive, collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to transportation decision making, project development, and implementation, taking into account, the views of stakeholders, and the local area where a project will exist, be operated, and be maintained. CSS considers the physical setting in which a project or activity is to be implemented, and seeks to enhance and conserve community defining features and environmental resources. This approach seeks to balance safety and mobility with local priorities. FDOT will encourage communities to contribute financially or in-kind toward enhanced project features and maintenance.

Consistent with the CSS principles prescribed by the Federal Highway Administration, FDOT transportation projects and activities shall be compatible and consistent with available resources, FDOT policies, and community visions.

The **SCE Handbook** provides additional guidance for evaluating SCE issues. In addition, the Aesthetics issue must be evaluated in accordance to **Part 2, Chapter 15** of this Manual. For Relocation, refer to requirements in **Section 9-3.3**, below.

9-2.5.4.1 Determine Significance of Impacts

The community analyst must determine if the perceived impact is significant as defined by CEQ regulations. According to the CEQ regulations (**40 CFR §§ 1500-1508**), the determination of a significant impact is a function of both **context** and **intensity**. To determine significance, the severity of the impact must be examined in terms of the type, quality and sensitivity of the resource involved; the location of the proposed project; the duration of the effect (short- or long-term) and other consideration of context. Significance of the impact will vary with the setting of the proposed action and the surrounding area.

Appropriate measures may exist that could prevent or reduce the impact; these are identified in the next step.

9-2.5.5 Step 5: Recommend Ways to Resolve Issues

As a project moves through the transportation planning process and sociocultural effects are identified, the community analyst assists in developing potential solutions to address the adverse effects. The community analyst actively participates in the role of problem solving through ongoing interaction with the community to ensure that identified

community effects are documented and addressed in a manner consistent with community values and desires, as well as FDOT standards and requirements.

The community analyst relies on public involvement to identify solutions to potential effects based on community goals and preferences. The public can provide input to:

1. Identify ways the project could be altered to avoid the effects
2. Identify ways the project could be modified to minimize the severity of the effect
3. Identify actions that could be taken to alleviate or offset an effect or replace a resource, as appropriate
4. Identify ways the project could be enhanced

Methods for resolving adverse sociocultural effects of a transportation project include: avoidance, minimization, mitigation, and enhancement. Some of the solutions address short-term effects (during construction), and others are implemented to address long-term effects. Additionally, solutions to resolve one effect may create another adverse effect.

Avoidance - Alterations to the project so that an effect does not occur.

Minimization - Modifications to the project to reduce the severity of the effect.

Mitigation - Actions taken to alleviate or offset an effect or replace a protected resource.

Enhancement - Additional desirable or attractive features added to the project to make it fit more harmoniously into the community. However, the feature should not be designed to replace lost resources or alleviate effects caused by the project.

The community analyst considers the potential effects of these measures on the affected community and confirms that the approach supports the project purpose and need. Additionally, the community analyst reviews potential solutions with others prior to making a commitment, especially during the early stages of a project. There may be engineering or financial reasons that make a potential solution not feasible.

The ETDM ***Final Programming Screen Summary Report*** should provide a starting point for further discussion and development with the community. However, the community analyst does not assume that this preliminary strategy is the final solution. At a minimum, the community analyst evaluates the acceptability of the preliminary strategy in light of changes in the community since completion of the Programming

phase, including consultation with the community to determine if there are other strategies that should be considered.

This step provides an opportunity for incorporating community values and specific project features as part of the project if it is appropriate and/or feasible to do so. The ***Sociocultural Effects Evaluation Handbook*** contains additional guidance and suggestions for identifying solutions.

9-3 DOCUMENTATION

The final step in the SCE Evaluation process is to document the findings. Project documentation for sociocultural effects evaluations in PD&E consists of:

1. Maintaining the project file
2. Completing the appropriate environmental document
3. Preparing information for the Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan, when projects involve relocations

All documents related to SCE Evaluations are to comply with the Governor's Plain Language Initiative (***Executive Order 07-01***). This applies to all written materials on Web sites, letters, advertisements, notices, applications, reports, pamphlets, brochures, and any other public communications. The Executive Order emphasizes that only necessary information is presented in a logical sequence. It requires short sentences written in the active voice that make it clear who is responsible for what. For assistance in meeting this initiative, refer to ***Communicate in Plain Language: A Two-way Conversation*** and ***Part I, Chapter 11 Public Involvement*** of this Manual.

Each of the documentation components is discussed in the following subsections.

9-3.1 Project File

The first type of documentation for the SCE Evaluation is in the project file. The project manager is responsible for collecting project documentation and maintaining the project file as part of the administrative record. The results of the SCE Evaluation are used for decision-making throughout the project development process. Therefore, it is important to preserve this information in a clear and concise manner for reference during the PD&E and future project phases. Proper documentation of the SCE Evaluation ensures accountability. Appropriate and complete documentation provides the guidance for the next project phase and contains commitments made, along with a description of any assurances given to the community. Access to the documentation allows the public to see that their input was heard and addressed.

The project file shows that sociocultural issues were given full consideration, and will be needed if the project is challenged. Where results of the evaluation are summarized in the environmental document, the project files must contain sufficient documentation to support the project decisions. All assessment materials (e.g., maps, analyses, public comments, survey responses, minutes of meetings, etc.) should be collected and maintained in the project file. Complete documentation of public involvement and community outreach activities used to support the SCE Evaluation must be included in the project file.

The project file should contain all the project components presented to agencies, elected officials, and the public. It should contain the project Purpose and Need Statement, the **Public Involvement Plan**, contact lists, schedule of activities, materials, maps, invitations, flyers, and photos of any community interaction relating to the proposed project from planning to construction. A project file documents data gathered at public involvement activities and provides a repository for meaningful information that accurately assesses the issues and concerns of a community. Much of this information is included in the **Final Programming Screen Summary Report**. For a complete list of documents that should be in the file at the completion of the PD&E Phase, see **Part 1, Chapter 4** of this Manual.

The project file is accessible to the public. The information should be stated clearly and be easy to understand, consistent with **Executive Order 07-01** regarding the use of plain language. See **Part 1, Chapter 11** for requirements related to document public involvement activities.

9-3.2 Environmental Document

The second type of documentation required for the SCE Evaluation is in the environmental document. The type of document is established by the COA determination. Upon the completion of the Programming Screen in the EST, each project will have a COA determination. The determination results in the project either being Categorical Excluded from **NEPA**, or requiring **NEPA** documentation in the form of an EA or an EIS. Major, non-federally funded projects will require a SEIR. Projects approved with Type 1 and Programmatic Categorical Exclusions (CEs) and Non-Major State Actions (NMSAs) have less than significant impacts (typically minimal); thus require minimal documentation. The following subsections identify requirements for including the SCE Evaluation results in each type of environmental document.

9-3.2.1 Minor Projects Documented as Type 2, Programmatic, or Non Major State Action

Projects approved with Type 1 and Programmatic Categorical Exclusions (CEs) and Non-Major State Actions (NMSAs) are generally minor in nature and do not have a significant impact, as defined in CEQ regulations (**40 CFR §§ 1500-1508**). The SCE Evaluation results are recorded on the appropriate project checklist in accordance to **Part 1, Chapters 2 or 10** of this Manual. Check “Yes” or “No” next to the items

regarding SCE issues. If any supporting documents were needed to substantiate these findings, the project manager should save them in the project file.

9-3.2.2 Type 2 Categorical Exclusions

For Type 2 CEs, documentation of the SCE Evaluation must satisfy all Federal and State environmental laws and demonstrate the proposed project has no significant impacts. SCE evaluation material should be briefly summarized and included in the “Summary of Environmental Impacts” section of the **Project Development Summary Report (PDSR)**. The checklist that is provided in **Part 1, Chapter 5** of this Manual may be used for the summary, and be included in the **PDSR**. Documentation for Type 2 CEs must include any mitigation measures which render the potential significant impact as a minimal impact. Procedures for completing the **PDSR** are contained in **Part 1, Chapter 4** of this Manual. This report is a summary of pertinent information on the selected alternative. Summaries of SCE Evaluation findings are included in the following sections of the **PDSR**:

1. Summary of Environmental Impacts – briefly summarize all impact evaluation material to the six SCE issues (see **Table 9.1**). If any supporting documents were produced to substantiate these findings, the project manager should save them in the project file
2. Summary of Permits and Mitigation - For unavoidable impacts, summarize any required minimization and mitigation actions or features that were developed in response to community impacts
3. Summary of Public Involvement – Include summaries and analyses of community outreach and public involvement activities used to support the SCE evaluation. Describe any ideas implemented in the preferred alternative that addressed community concerns
4. Commitments and Recommendations - Summarize all recommendations of the selected alternative that will need to be implemented by design and/or construction to address sociocultural effects or controversies.

Assessment materials needed to substantiate the findings reported in the **PDSR** must be included in the project file. See **Part 1, Chapter 5** of this Manual for more details about Type 2 CEs.

To record that the project has fully considered effects to minorities and other groups under the **Civil Rights Acts of 1964** (as amended), the following standard statement must be included in the environmental document:

This project has been developed in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

9-3.2.3 Environmental Assessments

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is prepared to assess the significance of potential impacts identified during the Programming Phase. One of the primary purposes of an EA is to help the lead federal agency decide whether or not an EIS is needed. The EA should be a concise document that briefly provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an EIS or a FONSI. It should not contain long descriptions, detailed information, or analyses (**40 CFR §1508.9**).

Results of the SCE Evaluation are documented in the “Impacts” section of the EA under “Social and Economic Impacts.” The summary should be commensurate in scope with the impact analysis findings and should include the following:

1. Sufficient information to briefly describe the communities and community resources that have the likelihood to be significantly impacted by the project
2. Descriptions of foreseeable impacts to the six SCE issues (See **Table 9.1**)
3. Recommended avoidance, mitigation, minimization, or enhancement actions to prevent significant impacts

To record that the project has fully considered effects to minorities and other groups under the **Civil Rights Acts of 1964** (as amended), the following standard statement must be included in this section of the document:

This project has been developed in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

The “Comments and Coordination” section of the EA includes a summary of community outreach activities used in the SCE Evaluation. Documentation of this section will be in accordance with the public involvement requirements found in **Part 1, Chapter 11** of this Manual.

Depending on the significance of the impacts, an EA will result in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) where the analysis of the technical studies indicates that no significant environmental impact will result from the proposed project or an EIS if significant environmental impacts are identified. The processing of an EA and a FONSI are discussed in **Part 1, Chapters 6 and 7** of this Manual. EIS documentation for SCE evaluations is discussed below.

9-3.2.4 Environmental Impact Statements

Projects that are determined to have a significant environmental impact require an EIS when federal funds or federal actions are required. The EIS is prepared during

Project Development to address appropriate environmental issues as required by CEQ regulations.

All assessment materials (for example, maps, analyses, public comments, survey responses, and minutes of meetings) are collected and maintained in the project record. A written summary of this material is prepared near completion of the PD&E phase, both for inclusion in the **NEPA** document and for reference as the project moves into future phases.

The findings of the SCE Evaluation are summarized either for direct inclusion in the **NEPA** document, or in a separate **SCE Technical Memorandum** which is referenced in the **NEPA** document. A separate **SCE Technical Memorandum** is prepared if the complexity of the project, severity of the effects, or quality of data justify a specialized technical report. When developing a separate **SCE Technical Memorandum**, use the standard format outline provided in **Figure 9.2**. If the project is a major project, the **SCE Technical Memorandum** is uploaded into the EST as a technical report.

Regardless of whether or not a separate **SCE Technical Memorandum** is prepared, documentation is provided in the appropriate section of the draft EIS document, as follows:

1. **Affected Environment** - provide a concise summary of the existing Environment, summarizing information from the Community Characteristics Inventory (CCI). At a minimum, include enough information to document that the special populations discussed in **Section 9-2.2** have received full consideration.
2. **Environmental Consequences** – summarize sociocultural effects for any of the six SCE issues (See **Table 9.1**) where impacts were identified. This discussion is included in the “Social and Economic Impacts” subsection of the EIS. This section also addresses strategies for resolving controversies, including special considerations for developing mitigation strategies for Civil Rights effects. A separate section addressing environmental justice is recommended for projects where this may be an issue. To record that the project has fully considered effects to minorities and other groups under the **Civil Rights Acts of 1964** (as amended), the following standard statement must be included in this section of the document:

This project has been developed in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

3. **Comments and Coordination** – address the following:
 - a. Project features developed by FDOT in cooperation with the community

- b. Coordination with government agencies, private groups, or the public

When preparing the final EIS, a **Commitments and Recommendations** section is added to the draft EIS (**Part 2, Chapter 32** of the *PD&E Manual*). This section includes all commitments and recommendations made by FDOT regarding SCE issues.

See **Part 1, Chapter 11** of this Manual for additional information related to **Title VI, Title VIII**, and **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** Compliance. Refer to **Part 1, Chapters 8 and 9** for more information about preparing Environmental Impact Statements.

9-3.2.5 State Environmental Impact Reports

The preparation of a State Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) is needed to comply with **Chapters 334, 338, 339, F.S.** in the implementation of the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) when federal funds or actions will not to be used to develop and construct a major transportation project subject to any of the qualifying conditions cited in **Part 1, Chapter 10** of this Manual.

Include SCE Evaluation results in the “Impact Evaluation” section of the SEIR. Where an SCE issue is not a part of or in any way involved with the project, mark the column NOINV for no involvement. If an issue exists but there is little or no impact, mark the column NONE. If a perceived impact ranges in level of magnitude from minor to substantial, mark the column MIN and provide documentation. If a perceived impact is significant, mark the column SIGN and provide documentation.

In the “Commitments and Recommendations” section of the SEIR, discuss all commitments made on a project in coordination with the community.

For those projects which the District determines will have a significant environmental impact, the District may opt to prepare the SEIR similar in scope and format to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In these cases, the SCE Evaluation findings are documented as outlined above in **Section 9-3.2.4**.

For more information about developing SEIRs, see **Part 1, Chapter 10** of this Manual.

9-3.3 Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan

Detailed data on relocations, replacement property and relocation assistance will be available in the Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan (CSRP). A wide range of methods for addressing potential impacts, including financial, design, replacement/restoration, planning/programmatic assistance, and regulatory strategies is available in **Chapter 9** of the *Right of Way Manual, Topic No. 575-000-000*.

To comply with the **FHWA Technical Advisory T6640.8A** and **Section 9.1.3** of the **Right of Way Manual**, the District Right of Way Office must prepare a CSR or similar document, and the data must be incorporated into the environmental document (Type 2 CE, EA, EIS or SEIR). A CSR must also be prepared whenever the District environmental staff is evaluating an action for Type 1 or Programmatic CE determination and relocations are involved. If there are no displacees, or if relocation services are not going to be provided on the project, then a CSR is not required.

The CSR is prepared by District Right of Way Relocation staff at the same time that the environmental document is being prepared by the District environmental staff. It is the responsibility of District environmental staff to coordinate with the Relocation Office to ensure that the preparation of the CSR coincides with project scheduling and that delays are avoided. Close coordination will also ensure that all alignment alternatives under consideration have been properly assessed and the prospect of error in data development is markedly reduced.

Once the Relocation Office has completed the CSR, the plan is submitted to District environmental staff for inclusion in the environmental document. Upon receipt of the plan, District environmental staff will include in the environmental document either a write-up of the complete CSR or a summary of the plan in sufficient detail to adequately address the relocation effects anticipated in the area. The environmental document must also reference that a CSR was prepared for the project. The CSR is developed for in-house use only; the plan will become a part of the project file and is not appended to the environmental document.

Since there is no federal requirement for the preparation of a CSR, federal approval of the plan is not necessary. The plan is, however, a principal data source used in the SCE Evaluation when discussing relocation effects in the environmental document; and therefore, FHWA must accept the CSR as adequate supporting documentation in compliance with **23 CFR 771**. This acceptance depends on the type of environmental document being prepared, as follows:

1. In preparing an EA or Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), a copy of the CSR must accompany the transmittal of the environmental document to FHWA. FHWA acceptance of the plan occurs when the EA or DEIS is approved for public availability. Once the project has been approved for public availability, the CSR is placed in the project file for the administrative record.
2. In preparing a Type 2 CE, a copy of the CSR will also accompany the transmittal to FHWA. FHWA acceptance of the CSR as adequate supporting documentation occurs when the Type 2 CE is approved. Once the Type 2 CE has been approved, the CSR is placed in the project file for the administrative record.

3. In preparing a State Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), the CSRП is placed in the project file consistent with **Part 1, Chapter 2** of the PD&E Manual.

The CSRП is updated at each project reevaluation phase as the project progresses through Design, Right of Way and Construction, consistent with **Part 1, Chapter 13** of the **PD&E Manual**. This update must show how the relocation effects originally evaluated, if any, have changed, and determine if these changes are considered to be significant. Any commitments made in the CSRП and incorporated into the Commitments and Recommendation section of the environmental document must be addressed for commitment compliance purposes. Project files must contain sufficient documentation to substantiate all reevaluation updates.

The development of information in the CSRП should correspond to the level of complexity of the project. In areas where there is little or no involvement with businesses, or relocations are limited to signs only, the information provided in the plan and the environmental document should reflect the level of effect predicted. Information provided should be secondary type information (for example, Census data or other published survey research data) in combination with a windshield survey to verify the reasonableness of the secondary source information.

The CSRП must address each build alternative under consideration by FDOT for additional study. When an alternative has been dismissed, the plan must support the rejection of it if relocation effects are a principal reason for dismissal. In discussing each alternative for the proposed action, the CSRП must include the following information, consistent with **Section 9.1.6** of the **Right of Way Manual**:

1. An estimate of types of households to be displaced, including:
 - a. An estimate of the percentage of minority (racial, national origin, and ethnic) households to be displaced
 - b. An estimate of the income range (in dollars) of the affected neighborhoods or community
 - c. An estimate of the tenure (or age) of the structures which are being displaced, taking into consideration the types, and effective and chronological age
 - d. An estimate of the percentage of elderly households to be displaced in relationship to the total households being displaced
 - e. An estimate of the percentage of households containing five or more family members
 - f. An estimate of disabled residential occupants for whom special

assistance services may be necessary

2. A discussion comparing available (decent, safe, and sanitary) housing in the area with the housing needs of displacees. The comparison should include:
 - a. Price ranges
 - b. Size (number of bedrooms)
 - c. Occupancy status (owner/tenant)
3. A description of special relocation advisory services that will be necessary for identified unusual conditions or unique problems. This description should identify special cases involving disabled, elderly, low income, racial and/or ethnic populations, and governmental and social agencies available to serve these particular needs. Consideration should be given to establishing a social service network to provide assistance if none is available.
4. A discussion of the actions proposed to remedy insufficient relocation housing, including a commitment to housing of last resort, if necessary.
5. An estimate of the number, type, and size of businesses to be displaced, including special business characteristics such as services to specialized clientele or cultural orientation. The approximate number of employees for each business should be included, along with the general effect of the business dislocation(s) on the economy of the community. Additionally, the discussion should identify:
 - a. Sites available in the area to which the affected businesses may relocate
 - b. Likelihood of such relocation
 - c. Impacts on remaining businesses
 - d. On-premises sign relocations (unless the sign has been acquired)
6. A discussion of the results of early consultation with the local government(s) and any early consultation with businesses subject to displacement, including any discussions of potential sources of funding, financing, planning for incentive packaging (for example, tax abatement, flexible zoning, and building requirements), and advisory assistance which has been or will be furnished, along with other appropriate information.

7. A description of the actions proposed to remedy insufficient relocation housing, including, if necessary, Last Resort Housing. If Last Resort Housing is anticipated, the plan should address how this housing could be provided; that is, whether newly constructed housing must be made available, or if there is sufficient replacement housing on the resource market to handle these Last Resort Housing situations.
8. The results of discussions with local officials, social agencies, and such groups as the elderly, disabled, non-driver, transit-dependent, and minorities regarding the relocation effects.
9. A statement that:
 - a. *The acquisition and relocation program will be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended; and*
 - b. *Relocation resources are available to all residential and business relocates without discrimination*
10. A summary of any potential contamination concerns.
11. An identification of any publicly owned lands, as defined in **Chapter 7, Section 11** of the **Right of Way Manual** which may require consideration for functional replacement of real property in public ownership. Discussion of the results and decisions of any meetings with property owners or jurisdictional agencies where the potential for "functional replacement" exists pursuant to **23 CFR 712** and **Chapter 7, Section 11** of the **Right of Way Manual** must be documented and may include the land or facility or both.

9-3.3.1 Considerations for Evaluating Relocation Effects

In the environmental document, evaluate and address the social and economic effects of the project so as to provide the reader with a good understanding of the project's effects on the human environment. These are documented as part of the SCE findings. Listed below are some important points for the community analyst to keep in mind in developing the information from the CSRP for inclusion in the relocation section of the environmental document:

1. All relocation information must be quantifiable (i.e., a general statement such as "There are sufficient resources available for residential displaces" is not acceptable as quantifiable data).
2. The CSRP must document the sources of information utilized in developing the plan. Since most of the information provided in the CSRP is secondary-

type information, these figures are estimates. The community analyst must take care to ensure that the information provided in the environmental document is accurate, timely and reasonably adequate with respect to identifying and discussing relocation effects and problems within the project area.

3. All pertinent data in the CSRP must be incorporated into the environmental document. All substantive issues identified in the CSRP should be discussed.
4. A brief discussion of Last Resort Housing must be provided when comparable replacement housing is not available. **Section 9-3.3.2** of this chapter provides standard information to be incorporated into the environmental document.
5. A brief summary of the department's Relocation Assistance Program must also be provided. **Sections 9-3.3.3** and **9-3.3.4** of this chapter provide standard information to be incorporated into the environmental document depending on whether there is involvement with relocatees or not.
6. If "functional replacement" pursuant to **23 CFR 712** may be provided, the results of discussions and decisions concerning "functional replacement" must be included in the environmental document. Any commitments or recommendations must also be listed in the appropriate sections.

9-3.3.2 Last Resort Housing

The discussion on Last Resort Housing is generally limited to an estimate of the number of households that will likely require Last Resort Housing and the inclusion of the following standard paragraph in the environmental document (Type 2 CE, EA, EIS, SEIR):

Comparable replacement housing for sale and rent is available in (Any City). However, there may be some last resort rent supplements and last resort replacement housing payments necessary. Last resort housing payments would be used in order to place the relocatees in decent, safe, and sanitary housing, if necessary. Should last resort housing be constructed, the housing would be available before the displacees are required to vacate their dwellings. There are numerous residential lots available for new construction within the (Any City) area. Lot sizes range from ____ square feet to ____ square feet and are priced from \$____ to \$____.

FDOT will ascertain exactly how many households actually require Last Resort Housing or rent supplements during the development of the Relocation Needs Assessment Survey during the Right of Way acquisition phase of project development.

9-3.3.3 Information Required When a Relocatee Is Involved

The following standard information must be included in the environmental document when there is involvement of a relocatee:

In order to minimize the unavoidable effects of Right of Way acquisition and displacement of people, the Florida Department of Transportation will carry out a Right of Way and relocation program in accordance with Florida Statute 339.09 and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-17).

The Florida Department of Transportation provides advance notification of impending Right of Way acquisition. Before acquiring Right of Way, all properties are appraised on the basis of comparable sales and land use values in the area. Owners of property to be acquired will be offered and paid fair market value for their property rights.

No person lawfully occupying real property will be required to move without at least 90 days written notice of the intended vacation date, and no occupant of a residential property will be required to move until decent, safe and sanitary replacement housing is made available. "Made available" means that the affected person has either by himself obtained and has the right of possession of replacement housing, or that the Florida Department of Transportation has offered the relocatee decent, safe and sanitary housing which is within his financial means and available for immediate occupancy.

At least one relocation specialist is assigned to each highway project to carry out the relocation assistance and payments program. A relocation specialist will contact each person to be relocated to determine individual needs and desires, and to provide information, answer questions, and give help in finding replacement property. Relocation services and payments are provided without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

All tenants and owner-occupant displacees will receive an explanation regarding all options available to them, such as (1) varying methods of claiming reimbursement for moving expenses; (2) rental replacement housing, either private or publicly subsidized; (3) purchase of replacement housing; and (4) moving owner-occupied housing to another location.

Financial assistance is available to the eligible relocatee to:

1. *Reimburse the relocatee for the actual reasonable costs of moving from homes, businesses, and farm operations acquired for a highway project.*

2. *Make up the difference, if any, between the amount paid for the acquired dwelling and the cost of a comparable decent, safe and sanitary dwelling available on the private market.*
3. *Provide reimbursement of expenses, incidental to the purchase of a replacement dwelling.*
4. *Make payment for eligible increased interest cost resulting from having to get another mortgage at a higher interest rate. Replacement housing payments, increased interest payments, and closing costs are limited to \$22,500 combined total.*

A displaced tenant may be eligible to receive a payment, not to exceed \$5,250, to rent a replacement dwelling or room, or to use as down payment, including closing costs, on the purchase of a replacement dwelling.

The brochures that describe in detail the Florida Department of Transportation's relocation assistance program and Right of Way acquisition program are "Your Relocation: Residential", "Your Relocation: Business, Farms and Nonprofit Organizations", "Your Relocation: Signs" and "The Real Estate Acquisition Process". All of these brochures are distributed at all public hearings and made available upon request to any interested persons.

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 guarantees each person equal opportunity in housing. The community analyst, in working with District Relocation staff, can ensure that FDOT complies with this law.

9-3.3.4 Information Required When There Are No Relocations

The following standard information must be included in the environmental document whenever the proposed action does not involve a residential or business relocation:

The proposed project, as presently conceived, will not displace any residences or businesses within the community. Should this change over the course of the project, the Florida Department of Transportation will carry out a Right of Way and relocation program in accordance with Florida Statute 339.09 and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-17). The brochures that describe in detail the department's relocation assistance program and Right of Way acquisition program are "Your Relocation: Residential," "Your Relocation: Business, Farms and Nonprofit Organizations," "Your Relocation: Signs" and "The Real Estate Acquisition Process." All of these brochures are distributed at all public hearings and made available upon request to any interested persons.

9-4 REFERENCES

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3. Council on Environmental Quality, Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500-1508), 1978
4. Executive Order 07-01, Florida Governor's Plain Language Initiative, 2007
5. Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, 1994
6. Federal Aid Highway Act of 1970 (23 USC 109(h))
7. Federal Highway Administration, Environmental Impact and Related Procedures (23 CFR 771), 1987
8. Florida Administrative Code, Rule 9J-5
9. Florida Department of Transportation, 2003, Public Involvement Handbook, Tallahassee, Florida
10. Florida Department of Transportation, 2005, Sociocultural Effects Evaluation Handbook, Tallahassee, Florida
11. Florida Department of Transportation, Communicate in Plain Language: A Two-way Conversation, 2007
12. Florida Department of Transportation, Environmental Screening Tool, <https://fla-etat.org/est>
13. Florida Department of Transportation, Environmental Screening Tool Handbook, 2008
14. Florida Department of Transportation, ETDM Planning and Programming Manual, 2006
15. Florida Department of Transportation, ETDM Web site, <http://etdmpub.fl-a-etat.org>.
16. Florida Department of Transportation, Plans Preparation Manual, Chapter 21: Transportation Design for Livable Communities (TDLC)
17. Florida Department of Transportation, Right of Way Manual, Topic No. 575-000-000

18. Florida Statutes, Chapter 163, Part II
19. Florida Statutes, Chapter 187, State Comprehensive Plan
20. Florida Statutes, Chapter 267, Florida Historical Resources Act
21. Florida Statutes, Chapter 311, Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development
22. Florida Statutes, Chapter 335.17, State Highway Construction; Means of Noise Abatement
23. Florida Statutes, Chapter 341, Intermodal Development Program
24. Florida Statutes, Chapter 348
25. Florida Statutes, Chapter 872, Offenses Concerning Dead Bodies and Graves
26. Florida Statutes, Section 163.3177 (6)(h), F.S.
27. Florida Statutes, Section 253.027, Emergency Archaeological Properties Acquisition Act, 1998
28. Florida Statutes, Section 332.006, Florida Aviation System Plan
29. Florida Statutes, Section 338.001, Florida Intrastate Highway System Cost Feasible Plan
30. Florida Statutes, Section 339.155, Florida Transportation Plan
31. Florida Statutes, Section 339.175 (5)(b)
32. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)
33. National Historic Preservation Act, 1966
34. Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise, 23 CFR, Part 772
35. SAFETEA-LU, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, 2005
36. The Acquisition Function, 23 CFR 712, 1999
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39. U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1968, Title VIII
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43. U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, 1990, Environmental Policy Statement
44. U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, 1994, Environmental Policy Statement
45. U.S. Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973, Section 324
46. U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Bulletin No. 00-02, 2000
47. U.S. Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
48. Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-17)

SCE CONSIDERATIONS

Social Effects

1. What are the demographics of the potentially affected population?
2. What displacements of population, if any, would be expected as a result of the project?
3. Would any increases or decreases in population be expected as a result of the project?
4. Would any displacement of minority populations be expected as a result of the project?
5. Are there any disproportionate effects on special populations?
6. Have minority populations previously been affected by other public projects in the area?
7. Would the project result in any barriers dividing an established neighborhood(s) or would it increase neighborhood interaction?
8. What changes, if any, in traffic patterns through an established neighborhood(s) would be expected as a result of the project?
9. Would any changes to social relationships and patterns be expected as a result of the project?
10. Would the project result in any loss, reduction or enhancement of connectivity to a community or neighborhood activity center(s)?
11. Would the project affect community cohesion?
12. Would the project result in the creation of isolated areas?
13. Would any increase or decrease in emergency services response time (fire, police, and EMS) be expected as a result of the project?
14. Does the project affect safe access to community facilities?
15. Would any changes in social value be expected as a result of the project?
16. Would the project be perceived as having a positive or negative effect on quality of life?
17. Have community leaders and residents had opportunities to provide input to the project decision-making process in the present and/or past?
18. Have previous projects in this area been compatible with or conflicted with the plans, goals and objectives of the community?
19. Is the proposed project consistent with the community vision?
20. Are transportation investments equitably serving all populations?

Economic Effects

1. Would any changes to travel patterns be expected that would eliminate or enhance access to any businesses?
2. Would any increases or decreases in traffic through traffic-based business areas be expected?

**TABLE 9.3 SCE Considerations
(Continued on next page)**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Would any changes in travel patterns be expected that would result in a business or district being bypassed? 4. Would access for special-needs patrons increase or decrease as a result of the project? 5. Would any increase or decrease in business visibility for traffic-based businesses be expected as a result of the project? 6. Would the loss of any businesses be expected as a result of the project? 7. Would any increases or decreases in employment opportunities in the local economy be expected as a result of the project? 8. Would regional employment opportunities be enhanced or diminished as a result of the project? 9. What is the effect of the project on military installations? 10. Would any real property be removed from the tax roles as a result of the project? 11. Is it likely that taxable property values would increase or decline as a result of the project? 12. Would changes in business activities increase or decrease the tax base?
<p><i>Land Use Effects</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Would the project result in a change in the character or aesthetics of the existing landscape? 2. Would the amount of recreation/open space be expected to increase or decrease as a result of the project? 3. Would the project be compatible with local growth management policies? 4. Would the project be compatible with adopted land use plans?
<p><i>Mobility Effects</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Would access to public transportation facilities be increased or reduced as a result of the project? 2. Would pedestrian mobility be increased or decreased as a result of the project? 3. Would non-motorist access to business and service facilities be increased or reduced as a result of the project? 4. How does the project affect intermodal connectivity? 5. Would any change in connectivity between residential and nonresidential areas be expected as a result of the project? 6. What are the expected changes to existing traffic patterns as a result of the project? 7. Would a change in any public parking areas be expected as a result of the project? 8. Would access for transportation disadvantaged populations be affected?

**TABLE 9.3 SCE Considerations
(Continued on next page)**

Aesthetics Effects

1. Are there noise or vibration sensitive sites near the project?
2. Is the project likely to affect a vista or viewshed?
3. Does the project blend visually with the area?
4. Is the project adjacent to any community focal point?
5. Is the project likely to be perceived as being compatible and in character with the community's aesthetic values?
6. What feature(s), if any, of the project might be perceived by the community as inconsistent with the character of that community?

Also see requirements in **Part 2, Chapter 15** of this PD&E Manual.

Relocation Effects

1. Would any displacement of residences and/or dwellings be expected as a result of the project?
2. Would any displacement of non-residential land uses be expected as a result of the project?
3. Do any potentially displaced non-residential uses have any unique or special characteristics that are not likely to be reestablished in the community?
4. Would any displacement of community or institutional facilities be expected as a result of the project?

See additional requirements in **Section 9-3.3, Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan**.

**TABLE 9.3 SCE Considerations
(Concluded)**

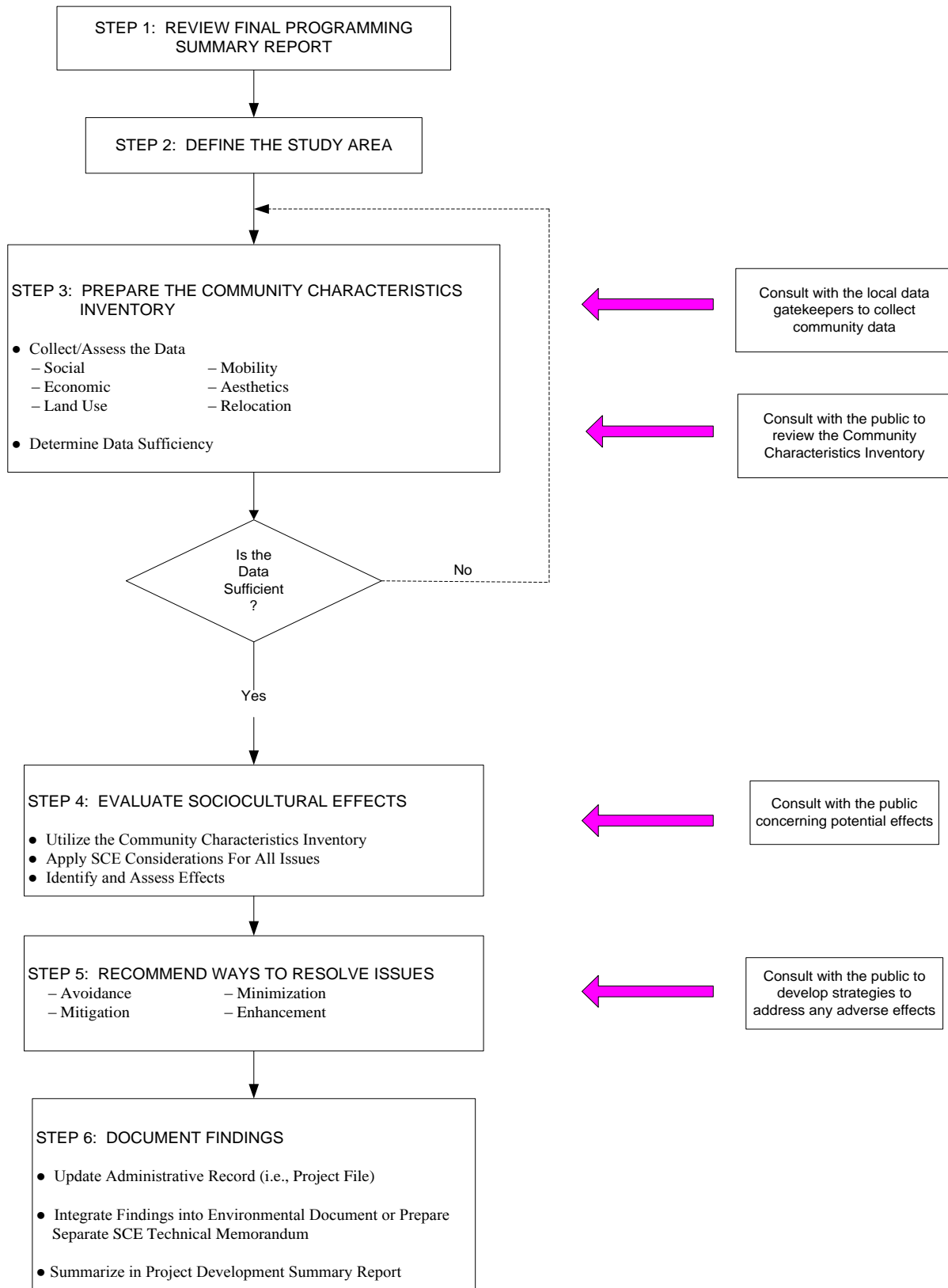


FIGURE 9.1 PD&E SCE Evaluation Process Chart

SCE Technical Memorandum

- I. Introduction
 - A. Project Summary
 - Project Purpose and Need
 - Conceptual Alternatives
- II. Community Characteristics Inventory/Map
- III. Potential Effects
 - A. Social Issues
 - Demographics
 - Community Cohesion
 - Safety
 - Community Goals/Quality of Life
 - B. Economic Issues
 - Commerce
 - Tax Base
 - C. Land Use Issues
 - Land Use Patterns
 - Plan Consistency
 - Growth Trends and Issues (past and present)
 - Community Goals/Quality of Life
 - D. Mobility Issues
 - Accessibility
 - Connectivity
 - Traffic Circulation
 - Public Parking
 - E. Aesthetic Issues
 - Noise/Vibration
 - Viewshed
 - Compatibility
 - Visual Project Fit
 - F. Relocation Issues
 - Residential
 - Non-Residential
 - Unique Facilities
 - G. Title VI/Civil Rights Issues
 - Social Groups afforded protection under civil rights legislation
 - Potential impacts to such groups
 - Determination of effects
 - Proposed mitigation
 - Records of involvement and consultation with such groups
- IV. Conclusion and Recommendations for Resolving Issues
 - A. Recommendations for Resolving Issues
 - B. Project Commitments
- V. Appendices
 - A. Data Sources
 - B. Public Involvement Summary and Analysis

FIGURE 9.2 Recommended SCE Technical Memorandum Outline